

SONGS
of
GLADNESS

by
JAMES L. HUGHES

Christmas, 1914





To Mr. ~~Wm~~ Lyon McKenzie King

With all Good Wishes

Christmas, 1914

James L. Hughes

Keep Smiling



In living over life's best days
The day comes back again,
When first we met, and in my heart
You smile, as you did then.

And still I smile a sweeter smile
Because you smiled, and so
Your smile is passed to other hearts
To give them brighter glow.

Keep smiling, for your happy smiles
In other lives shine on,
To bring them in their darkest hours
The glory of Hope's dawn.

Questions



1. WHO AM I?

I am a thought of God,
I am his plan,
In His own image, He
Made me a man.

2. WHERE AM I?

In a progressive world
Searching for light,
That I may truly love
Freedom and Right.

3. WHY AM I?

I am God's partner here,
His will to do,
That I may help to make
All life more true.

Evening



Lovingly lingered the fading light,
Tenderly kissing each tree and flower,
Whispering softly a fond "good night,"
Promising joy for the morning hour.

Silently then in the woodland sleep,
Wistfully watching the opal west,
Nature prepared for her needed sleep,
Welcoming gladly the time of rest.

Over me far in the forest glen
Motherly arms of the hemlocks spread;
Peace filled my heart, as I listened then,
Reverently to the prayers they said.

After the prayer came the evensong
Sung by a thrush on a grand old oak;—
Thrilled by its melody clear and strong
Up in the sky all the stars awoke.

The New Earth and Heaven

Spores on the fern frond's back,
Dust specks you seem to be,
Till through a microscope
Clusters of pearls I see.

Stars of the winter night,
Mere spots of feeble glow,
Millions of miles away,
You are great suns, I know.

Perfect are all Thy works,
Maker of earth and sky,
When I can see aright
With comprehending eye.

New earth and heaven may mean
Simply a change in me.
Glory exists; I need
Power to truly see.

Vision



To see is greater than to know,
So I shall pray
That I may see a clearer glow
Of truth each day.

Though I know all that man has known,
Blind I may be;
There is some glory I alone
Have power to see.

My vision, I must surely see,
Or fail to do
My work to make the future be
More grandly true.

Faith should be ever turned to sight,
So I shall try
To find new stars to give fresh light
On Life's wide sky.

In Lucerne



"Shut up with God among His mountains."

Mrs. Browning.

This is our universe, Life Supreme !
Mountain, and river, and lake, and glen
Form the whole earth, as I sit with Thee
Here in the valley—a child again.

We are alone in our universe ;
Open my heart is to-day to Thee ;
Fill it with glory and majesty,
Teach the true meaning of life to me.

Great are Thy mountains, but as Thy child,
I am still greater. Thy power is mine,
If I believe that true life must be
Growth, conscious growth, towards the life divine

Grateful am I for this vision clear,
Vision of duty and faith sublime :—
Trustingly up to life's mountain top
Hand in Thy hand, I shall ever climb.

Progress



(G. F. Watts' wonderful symbolic Picture)

True artists are revealers as true poets are.

Up where the glow of the light divine,
Ever continues to brightly shine,
Bearing aloft his triumphal bow
Progress rides onward o'er men below.

Down on the earth are the men whose eyes
Never are turned towards the shining skies;
Those who are blind to the radiant glow
God reveals ever, that men may grow.

Indolence lies on the ground, and makes
Never an effort to rise, but takes
Selfish enjoyment of sense alone;
Vision and wisdom alike unknown.

One with a heart that is hard and cold,
Rakes with his fingers in muck for gold;
Wealth has supplanted the dreams of youth,
Friendship, and hope, and the love of truth.

One reads a book in dim candle light,
Falsely believing knowledge is might;
Searching the past with a weary eye,
Missing the glow of the golden sky.

One sees the light, and is born anew;
Gets a clear vision of work to do;
Rises to start on his upward climb
Knowing that life should be made sublime.

Sluggard, and miser, and student, too,
Lose the rich glory of higher view.
Vision is greater than knowledge or gold.
See! And your vision for men unfold.

A Bird Song at Night



The sun had set behind the hill,
'Twas afterglow in May :—
Far in the woods I sat and watched
The red sky turn to gray.

The light reluctant faded fast,
Sweet fragrance filled the air,
While trees and flowers their gratitude
Expressed in silent prayer.

My heart responsive felt the strange
Enchantment of the hour,
When from a distant tree top came
A song of witching power.

I cannot write the melody
That filled my soul with light,
It was a silver tone of love,
A bird song in the night.

It may have pleaded that the glow
On western sky might stay ;
It may have been a song of faith
And hope for coming day.

It may have been a strain of love
To cheer his loyal mate :—
To me it was an angel's voice
That poured from heaven's gate.

Before me life's exultant days
Passed in review again,
And joyous dreams of future growth
Came clearly to me then.

My River



Clear was the spring in the pasture field
Close to the foot of the tall elm tree,
Source of my river a half yard wide,
Wonderful river it was to me.

Far to the heart of the woods it ran;
Often I followed it there alone,
Daring to go with a throbbing heart
Into the depths of the great unknown.

Barefoot and hatless I worked all day
Changing its course with my wooden spade;
Building a bridge, or a water wheel;
Sailing my ships on the lakes I made.

Mine were great visions of power to plan;
Mine were the joys of achievement, too;
Mine were the glories of earth and sky;
Mine was a wonderful world all new.

Back to the farm as a man I went,
River and spring and tall elm had gone;
But all they started to grow in me,
Vision, and power, and joy live on.

Epoch Milestones



It's a long way back to childhood,
But I often go alone
In my dreams to feel the glory
Of great days that I have known ;

For my life is rich in epochs,
When I felt new kindling power ;
When I knew the thrill exultant
Of a vision giving hour ;

When some vital soul triumphant
Opened windows in my breast,
And new light shone in to guide me
Upward to the glowing crest.

In the past I see no shadows,
But life's beacon lights instead ;
So I count my epoch milestones,
Not the tombstones of the dead.

Evening By The Sea



Sing, Surf! As you roll to the strand;
Sweet is your song to me;
Sing on of the friends that I love
Yonder beyond the sea.

Red, opal and gold of the sky
Glowing on breaking crest;
Tell! Tell of the love they have sent
Out of the distant West.

Scheveningen, The Hague.

After the Rain



Spring flowers grow fair and sweet
After the rain ;
Life growth is rich and true
After its pain.

After our sorrows pass
Love heals the scars ;
Over life's darkest night
Shine Hope's bright stars.

Sad days we soon forget,
When they are gone ;
But joyous memories
Live ever on.

What Shall I Sing To You?



Sing as the Bob-o-link sang of Joy
With his clear and merry tune,
Cheering my heart with his song of praise
For the clover fields in June.

Sing as the thrush to his mate sang Love
In the mystic afterglow,
Deep in the glen, till my soul was filled
With the bliss the angels know.

Sing as my mother of Hope and Faith,
And of Courage, Freedom, Truth ;
Sing as she sang, till I feel once more
The inspiring thrill of youth.

Sing me these songs and they'll wake my powers
To a consciousness of might ;—
Fearless I'll climb towards the mountain top
Till I reach its shining height.

Youth's Scattered Flowers



Along my path in Youth's great days
I scattered many flowers
Of joy and hope, I gathered fresh
In youth's enchanted bowers.

I walked along the path, a man ;—
My flowers still were there,
Withered they were, but from their leaves
Sweet fragrance filled the air.

I touched them, and their bloom returned,
And I could clearly see
Dear friends I fondly loved in youth,
Come smiling back to me.

And often, when the cares of Life
Come floating very near,
I smell the fragrance of youth's flowers,
And clouds soon disappear.

True Beauty



"Why are all flowers not white, or blue,
Yellow, or red?
I wish their colors were the same,"
The young child said.

God knew all children would not wish
The same as you;
So made the colors different.
I'm glad He knew.

Each flower should try to be the best
That it can be;
God beauty makes of unlike things
In harmony.

Knowing, Growing, Seeing

Yes! I am thankful for the glow
That fills my heart because I know
So much of what mankind has done;—
Of noble efforts, triumphs won.

My heart is full of gratitude,
Because I know that life is good,
And that, however much I know,
Towards higher truth I still may grow.

Still deeper gratitude is mine,
Because I see the light divine
Revealing ever problems new
In wider, truer, clearer view.

I should rejoice because I know,
And more because my power may grow,
But highest joy should come to me,
For what is yet to know and see.

Youth's Halo



I have seen the mighty mountains, Dick,
 How high their heads in pride ;
I have seen the rushing rivers, Dick,
 Sweep down the mountain side ;
But I'd rather see the green hills, Dick,
 That filled our lives with joy ;
And I long to paddle in the creek
 I fished in, when a boy.

I have seen the greatest cities, Dick,
 And they are truly great ;
I have seen the lordly castles, Dick,
 Where nobles live in state ;
But I'd rather see the village, Dick,
 Where first our prayers we said ;
And the cottage, where my mother, Dick,
 First tucked her boy in bed.

I have seen superb cathedrals, Dick,
 Sublime, majestic, grand ;
I have seen fine seats of learning, Dick,
 The best in ev'ry land ;
But I'd like to see again, Dick,
 Our little chapel shrine ;
And I'll ne'er forget the school, Dick,
 Where vision first was mine.

A Memory



I was thirteen and she was twelve.
In blooming May
I walked a blessed mile with her
From school one day.
Out from the village street we went,
Near the old mill,
Along the road and past the church
Beyond the hill.

We spoke of beauty that we saw
On field and sky ;
She loved the trees, the flowers, the clouds,
And so did I.
We reached the parting of our ways,
And said "good bye",
When wistful tenderness I saw
Light up her eye.

We silent stood, until I said ;
May I come, too ?
She blushed, then smiled and coyly said,
"I'd like it—do !"
Some of the sweetest flowers of life
That still remain
First started in my heart to grow
In that green lane.

The Real Test of Success



All that, the wise have taught;
All that the great have done;
All that the poets sang;
All that the brave have won;
Leaves me a failure sad,
Unless I'm truly glad.

Art may reveal great truths;
Science new laws unfold;
Struggle may bring me fame;
Life give rich store of gold;
Still I'm a failure sad,
Unless I'm truly glad.

Drop Gladness on Your Path



Drop gladness on your path
Wheree'er you go ;
It will take root to cheer
Hearts full of woe.

Plant the sweet flowers of joy
Where you find tears ;
Perfume will rise from them
Through all the years.

Pressed flowers of happiness
Stored in the breast,
When sorrow comes, or fear,
Bring hope and rest.

Pessimism and Optimism



"Earth is a vale of bitter tears ;—"
Joys should grow brighter through the years.

"All men to evil are inclined ;—"
Men grow toward God, when truth they find.

"Men are depraved ; to sin they plan ;—"
In His own image God made man.

"Men are unworthy worms of dust ;—"
God is my partner ; Him I trust.

"Sorrows bring darkness ev'ry hour ;—"
Darkness is weakness :—light is power.

"Clouds hide the future from my view."
Do what the present brings to you.

Answers



"How can I faith and patience learn?"
Watch the unfolding of a fern.

"How can my heart get free from pain?"
Look at a field of waving grain.

"How can I conquer doubt and fear?"
Store sunshine, when the sky is clear.

"What message should my sorrows bring?"
When winter passes, then comes spring.

"Why do you smile when clouds hang low?"
When souls are calm the clouds soon go.

"Why do your troubles end so soon?"
My life with Nature is in tune.

From Dawn To Dark



I love the vital glow of dawn
And song of lark ;
When light's triumphant majesty
Shines out the dark ;
When softly out of grateful hearts
Each flower and tree,
Of joy, and peace, and greater growth
Whispers to me.

I love the happy, busy hours
Throughout the day ;
When in the sunlight men may work
And children play ;
When by achievement of his plans
Man learns to see
New visions of a higher life,
And thus grow free.

I love the sunset, when the light
Paints its goodbye
In colors of exultant hope
Across the sky
So grandly, that all nature turns
To see the west,
And life in all its varied forms
Prepares to rest.

The Sensible Pansy



A rose, and an oak, and apple tree,
Who foolishly wished something else to be,
Stood gloomily trying one day to die;—
The gardener loved them and asked them why?

The apple tree trembled, and shyly spoke:—
"I'd live, if I only could be an oak,
And grow, till my branches could reach the sky;
I cannot, and so I shall droop and die."

The rose said, she'd live on and on, if she
Could grow such fine fruit as the apple tree;
"But I am no use to the world, so I
Have fully decided that I shall die."

The oak was ashamed that with all his power
He could not grow either fine fruit or flower;
"I know that my trunk is both large and high,"
Said he, "but I think that I ought to die."

The gardener saw, as he turned away
A pansy still blooming in colors gay;
It said, "I could not be a rose or a tree,
So a good little pansy I tried to be."

Laverockdale*



I saw it first a bare wide waste,
A grassy slope with fringe of trees,
A purling burn along its side,
With sedges waving in the breeze.

To-day a stately home looks out
Across a field of smiling flowers ;
The burn sings in a rocky glen
Through lakes, and waterfalls, and bowers.

Transformed it is by loving hearts
Who planned with taste, and wrought with care ;—
No other garden ever held
Such flowers ; so tall, so sweet, so rare.

I asked a foxglove nine feet high
To tell me why so tall it grew ?
“ They love us, so we do our best ;—
Were you a flower, sir, wouldn't you ? ”

**Home of Mr. and Mrs. Ivory, Colinton, Scotland.*

The Perfect Garden

Laverockdale



Most lovely garden in the world!
I wondered how your flowers grew
So grandly, till I asked a rose
Who kindly told me—then I knew.

Conditions for each flower are found
Its special needs to suit, and so
In perfect form, and beauty, each
May freely, strongly, truly grow.

So human souls reach highest growth,
When each has found its special power,
And freely grows till it reveals
The beauty of life's perfect flower.

The Star of Hope



Black clouds shut out the setting sun,
The darkness settled into night;—
Faint hearts were fearful in the gloom,
That they no more should see the light.

But high above the mountain top
A lone, bright star shone clearly out;
Faith saw in it the hidden sun,
And hearts grew free from dwarfing doubt.

There is no night of life so dark,
But o'er the mountain clear and bright
The star of Hope will ever shine
To guide us onward by its light.

Trust And Be Glad



Garner no sorrows up,
Keep joys in store ;
Grief, when in gladness lost,
Troubles no more.

Grief is but lack of faith ;
Doubting makes sad ;
Hope fills the soul with joy ;
Trust and be glad.

"Poor Little Stone"



The loyal blacksmith's blood was stirred
To see the foe at Lundy's Lane ;—
He hastened to the battle field,
But bade his boy at home remain;
Yet, when amid the battle's strife
His blue eyed son stood by his side,
And said : "I've come to fight with you,"
His patriot heart was filled with pride.

"You have your mother's heart," he said,
"She'd bless you, could she see you here:—"
Love for a moment waked the past,
But duty dried the starting tear;
For louder grew the din of war,
Fiercer the foemen's bold attack,
And stronger still the stern resolve
Of British hearts to drive them back.

The father and his noble lad
Throughout the day fought side by side,
Till in the twilight hour the boy
Fell in his father's arms and died.
Then when the battle storm had passed,
And victory was surely won,
The father dug himself the grave
In which to lay his gallant son.

"Poor Little Stone"

(Continued)



And on the field he found and cut
With his own hand this humble stone;
And well it marks the sacred spot,
For stone and hero were his own.
Call it not "poor", no quarried shaft
Of rarest marble ever gave
A sweeter message to the world
Above a sleeping hero's grave.

These rude'y chiselled letters show
No trace of sculptor's studied art,
But each word truly represents
The sorrow of a father's heart.
Yea, more! They tell of tenderness,
And loving pride, because his son
Fearless and loyal, bravely fought,
And shared with him the triumph won.

The Auld Brig o' Doon



Upon the Brig o' Doon we stood,
And kirk and river, hill and wood
Spoke loud of Burns, and round us there
His spirit hovered in the air.

Enchanted by a magic spell
The rippling river seemed to tell
The story that he whispered low
To Mary in the afterglow.

The birds sang love songs in the trees,
And witches floated on the breeze
Behind Tam's mare, till rushing on
She passed us tail-less, and was gone.

And clearly to our minds was brought
The message of his noble thought
Of Freedom for the human mind,
True source of Hope for all mankind.

Our lives with nature were in tune,
For on the Banks o' Bonny Doon
Pure sylvan beauty lingers still
Each ardent heart with joy to fill.

Then, as we stood enraptured there,
Soft strains of music filled the air;—
An old musician strove to win
Subsistence with his violin.

But soon the music changed, for lo!
A charming lady held the bow,
Who played so sweetly that her power
New beauty gave to tree and flower.

And evermore, when those who heard
By music's magic power are stirred,
Their heart's will turn to hear again
The music in the Doon's deep glen.